

Cup winners struggle against lively Wycombe

Sports Mail Special Report

WYCOMBE WAN 1 : WALTHAMSTOW AVE 1

WALTHAMSTOW, anxious to keep up a point per game to win the Isthmian League and so complete the "double," had to defend strongly against a surprisingly lively Wycombe attack today. Bambridge and Prince were both limping towards the end, but Wycombe attacked repeatedly, although McGuire was in good form in goal.

Wycombe: Brown; Lewis. Atkins; James, Fisher, Beck; Tomlin. Ashby. Rockell, Trott, Murphy.

Walthamstow: McGuire; Edwards, Bambridge; Andrews, Prince, Keens; Groves, Seidenbird, Gough, Sulley, Collett.

Referee: D. W. R. Copp (Hemel Hemstead).

England and County calls combined with injuries to sap the strength of both teams when Wycombe Wanderers met Walthamstow Avenue, chasing the "double," in a match which could decide the Isthmian League championship at Loakes Park.

Wycombe were without Bates, Len Worley and Thomas. Avenue had Lewis and Harvey on England duty and Saggars and Minall injured.

Without Paul Bates to prompt it, an aimless looking Wycombe

attack took a long time to settle down. The experienced Stan Prince easily held Rockell, Wycombe's emergency centre forward, in the early stages.

SURPRISE HEADER

But ROCKELL surprised everybody when, after seven minutes, he pinpointed a flying header into the net from Tomlin's corner.

The Avenue defence began to look very shaky as Wycombe hustled away. Trott was in the thick of the action. He blazed a fierce shot over the crossbar and then nearly beat goalkeeper McGuire to Rockell's centre.

Little Reg Groves moved the ball intelligently for Walthamstow but with four reserves in their attack Avenue were finding it tough against a strong

Wycombe defence in which James, formerly a centre forward, was prominent at right half.

With Rockell emulating Bates and wandering to the wings, Avenue were frequently unsettled.

BICYCLE KICK

When Bambridge fouled Tomlin in another move the left winger crossed a fine free kick. Ashby headed the ball on and Rockell thrilled the crowd by connecting with an ambitious bicycle kick. McGuire just managed to tip the ball over the bar.

When Beck was taken off the field with a bad nose bleed, Avenue pressed strongly and nearly equalised.

Ashby and goalkeeper McGuire were both hurt in a goal-mouth duel but soon recovered.

Half-time: Wycombe 1, Walthamstow 0.

Brown saved three shots in a row but stood no chance when Keenes split the home defence with a through pass. GOUGH promptly slammed a 52nd minute equaliser.

Fisher was the strong man of the Wycombe defence. But it was Lewis who bobbed up on the goal-line to save Gough's shot with Brown beaten.

RESULT:

WYCOMBE	1
WALTHAMSTOW	1